

4. Make a list of things they might do or say if they were at a place where people were drinking alcohol and they didn't want to participate, especially if one of the people drinking is their ride home. Can they see themselves saying or doing these things?
5. Describe someone they know who does not make decisions based on peer acceptance. What traits or characteristics do they possess?
6. Describe a person who makes destructive decisions. How is this person different from the person you described in #5?
7. Consider whether they would call their parents or a trusted adult if they were someplace where people were drinking alcohol and they were worried about how to get home safely? What do they think their parents would say? Ask them.

Four Ways for Kids to Say No to an Impaired Driver

1. No thanks, I have another ride (then call your parents or another trusted adult for a ride).
2. I think I'm going to spend the night (then call your parents to alert them of the situation).
3. I think I'm going to walk (ONLY if it's an area that you normally walk and are familiar with, it's during daylight, AND you have a buddy with you).
4. There's no way I'm riding with you.

Adapted from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism "Making a Difference – Talk to Your Child About Alcohol" and from the National Academies of Science Report, "Reducing Underaged Drinking: A Collective Responsibility" and "Smashed – Toxic Tales of Teens and Alcohol" handbook.



helping
students
make the **right turn!**™



Thank you for including the California Highway Patrol's Right Turn program in your classroom.

Now that the presentation is over, the California Highway Patrol has some tips on keeping the issue alive with your students in order to encourage continued discussion about peer pressure and drinking and driving. With the average age of first alcohol use in the US now reported to be 12, it's not too early to start talking to middle school students about making smart decisions when it comes to drugs, alcohol, peer pressure, and drinking and driving. In fact, 20 percent of eighth graders have been reported to have recently consumed alcohol. It's not too early at all.

Students will likely be faced with making a judgment call about riding with an impaired driver long before they ever legally get behind the wheel. What is a seventh grader going to do if his ride home has been drinking? Will he know how to handle the situation? What if an eighth grader's older boyfriend has a driver's license? What's she going to do if he's been drinking? These are real life scenarios that are worth discussing with your students BEFORE they find themselves in a situation that could be life threatening.

The California Highway Patrol has tips specifically for teachers on how to address the issue of drinking and driving with students, including ideas on alcohol prevention strategies, classroom activities, and ways to help kids say no.

Young Teens and Alcohol: The Risks

1. Alcohol-related traffic collisions are a major cause of death among teens and alcohol use often contributes to drowning, suicide, and homicide.
2. Teens who drink are more likely to have problems with school work and school conduct.
3. An individual who begins drinking as a young teen is four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than someone who waits until adulthood to use alcohol.
4. A young person dies in a traffic crash due to drinking/drug use and driving once an hour on weekends and once every two hours on weekdays.
5. Young males account for 77 percent of alcohol-related youth fatalities.

Taking Action: Classroom Activities

These classroom activities can either be done as a group discussion or as a writing assignment. Have students do the following:

1. Make a list of all the excuses they have heard or can think of regarding why someone would choose to drive while under the influence. Discuss why these are really just excuses and do not justify the action.
 2. Brainstorm all of the possible consequences of riding with an impaired driver and write a response to each excuse (give an alternative).
 3. Outline two options for their future – one in which they ride with an impaired driver and one in which they make another choice. How do these two scenarios differ? How does their choice impact both long and short-term goals?
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